



NEWS RELEASE

WYOMING DISTRICT OFFICE

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Tom Lockhart Named Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year 2005

Casper – The Wyoming District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has named Tom Lockhart, Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year 2005. Steve Despain, District Director, will be presenting this award to Mr. Lockhart at the annual banquet of the Casper Chamber of Commerce on May 6, 2005.

This award is given to an individual who has fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for veterans of the U.S. armed forces. Evaluation criteria includes active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses; evidence of increased business opportunities for veterans as a result of the nominee's actions; advisory activities to improve awareness among veterans' groups of small business opportunities; advocacy of special consideration for veteran-owned small businesses in government policymaking; demonstrated accomplishment in obtaining support within the community for the establishment of veteran-owned small businesses and other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's effective advocacy of veteran-owned small businesses. The President of the United States recognizes contributions of the small business community to the American economy and society by proclamation each year.

Mr. Lockhart is retired, but has been an advocate for veterans and veteran's issues in the Wyoming legislature. Tom sponsored a bill that will protect not only veteran businesses, but all businesses when they comply with the Federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). His Bill, which was passed without a dissenting vote in either the House or Senate, will protect an employer's Unemployment Insurance rate from being increased due to compliance with the USERRA law. Tom was also instrumental in passing veteran legislation that will increase the opportunities for veterans to attend State Institutions at no cost which will allow veteran business owners to take classes related to running and operating a business and increasing their skills.

Tom spends much of his time providing and improving opportunities for veterans with the State of Wyoming. His dedication to providing opportunities and addressing concerns that Veteran Owned Businesses are facing has been outstanding.

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